

## Message Text

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73

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

FRB-02 INR-09 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12

CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 SAL-01 OMB-01 INT-08 DODE-00

PM-09 H-02 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

OEP-01 T-03 STR-08 RSR-01 /186 W  
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R 141309 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1079

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USINT BAGHDAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2938

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ETRD ETRN ENRG LE IZ SA

SUBJECT: IRAQI BAN ON IMPORTS FROM LEBANON

REF: BEIRUT 2866

SUMMARY: IN OUR JUDGMENT, MAR 12 IRAQI DECISION TO BAN IMPORTS AND TRANSIT TRADE FROM LEBANON STEMMED FROM COMBINATION OF SEVERAL FACTORS, INCLUDING GOL' S TAKEOVER OF LOCAL IPC FACILITIES, THAT HAVE LATELY EXACERBATED LEBANESE- IRAQI RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. GOL TAKEOVER OF IPC FACILITES LEBANON ALMOST IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF GOI- IPC SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT WAS UNDOUBTEDLY ONE CAUSE OF BAN. SINCE PUBLIC VERSION IPC- IRAQ SETTLEMENT APPEARED TO CEDE FACILITES TO IRAQ, BAGHDAD REGIME MAY HAVE FELT THAT DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS REQUIRED  
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OVERT RETALIATION FOR APPARENT DOUBLE- CROSS IN ORDER TO DISARM REGIME' S INTERNAL CRITICS. IRAQIS MAY ALSO INTEND BAN AS A WARNING TO GOL NOT TO INTERFERE WITH OIL EXPORT FLOW OR FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS, AS TRANSIT COUNTRIES PRONE TO DO. HOWEVER, IRAQIS MAY HAVE HOPED-- DESPITE FACT THAT GOL HAD NEVER GIVEN THEM REASON TO THINK SO- THAT LEBBANON WOULD AGREE TO SELL " NATIONALIZED" IPC FACILITIES IN LEBANON TO GOI, THEREBY ENABLING IRAQ TO CONTROL PIPELINE' S TERMINAL. IF THIS IS SO, WOULD APPEAR THAT IN IRAQI EYES MICHEL AFLAQ' S FAMOUS DICTUM, " ARAB CONTROL OF ARAB OIL", APPLIES ONLY TO BAATHIST ARABS, AND THAT OTHER ARAB (I. E., LEBANESE) INTERESTS DO NOT COUNT.

2. IRAQI WRATH ON THIS OCCASION IS PROBABLY ALSO RELATED TO BAGHDAD' S LONG- TIME DISPLEASURE OVER WHAT IS REGARDED AS PRO- SAUDI, ANTI BAATHIST POLICIES FOLLOWED BY GOL AND, IN PARTICULAR, BY PRIMIN SALAM. TRUE TO THEIR BAATHIST MYTHOLOGY, IRAQI HAVE GENERALLY TENEDED LOOK FOR DEMONS BEHIND LEBANON' S EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA, AND THEY DOUBTLESS VIEW GOL' S DECISION TO TAKE OVER IPC AS MOVTVATED MORE BY " REACTIONARY" PRESSURES FROM SAG THAN BY LEBANESE NATIONAL INTEREST. RECENT SUCCESSFUL VISIT OF PRES FRANGIE TO SAUDI ARABIA, WHICH CEMENTED LEBANESE- SAUDI RELATIONS EVEN FUTHER, COULD WELL HAVE INCREASED IRAQI SUSPICIONS.

3. SAME PROBABLY GOES FOR GOL EFFORT TO CRACK DOWN ON ACTIVITIES OF LEFTIST, " PROGRESSIVE" FORCE IN LEBANON IN RECENT WEEKS. PRO- IRAQI BAATHISTS PLAYED HIGHLY VISBLE ROLE IN AGITATION CARRIED ON IN LATE JAN - EARLY FEB AMONG LEBANESE TOBACCO GROWERS, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ( BEIRUT 1331), AND NUMBER OF THEM UNDOBTEDLY HAVE BEEN ADVERSELY AFFECTED AS RESULT OF UNUSALLY TOUGH LINE ( INCLUDING TEACHER DISMISSALS, ETC.) ADOPTED BY GOL.

4. LEBANESE PRESIDENCY OFFICIALS HAVE CONFIRMED TO US THAT GOL DOES NOT RPT NOT INTEND SHUT DOWN PIPELINE TO TRIPOLI OR TAKE OTHER UNFRIENDLY STEPS TO RETALIATE FOR IRAQI BAN ON IMPORTS FROM LEBANON. APPEATS GOL, HAVING BECOME SOLE MASTER OF AN INDUSTRY THAT BRINGS IT RENEWED INCOME OF UP TO LL 50 MILLION PER YEAR, IS HOPING THIS BOYCOTT LIKE OTHERS BEFORE IT, WILL PASS. BUFFUM

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\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* CONFIDENTIAL

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**TAGS:** ENRG, ETRD, ETRN, PFOR, IZ, JO, LE, US, n/a  
**To:** AMMAN  
BAGHDAD  
JIDDA  
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